

VZCZCXRO9730
PP RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHUJA #2376 3401558
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 051558Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4640
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1560
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0546
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 0403
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS ABUJA 002376

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W, INR/AA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KGOV](#) [PINR](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN SLOW-MOVING RESHUFFLE UPDATE: SENATE
CONFIRMS 13 MINISTERIAL NOMINEES, RECEIVES 5 MORE NAMES

REF: ABUJA 2269

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: On December 3, the Senate confirmed the list of 13 ministerial nominees forwarded to them by Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua (reftel), and acknowledged the receipt of five more names to fill the 22 vacancies created by the October 29 removal of 19 ministers, the resignation of another, and the creation of 2 slots for the new Ministry for the Niger Delta. Press reports indicate that a sixth name was forwarded to, but not publicly acknowledged by, Senate President David Mark. As is normal procedure here, no indication of future portfolios was given, nor was any indication given as to when a third list would be forwarded that would presumably fill out the rest of Yar'Adua's cabinet. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) On December 3, the full Senate took only 18 minutes to confirm President Yar'Adua's November 17 list of 13 nominees, which included Dr. Sam Egwu (Ebonyi State), Dr. Rilwanu Lukman (Kaduna State), Professor Dora Akunyili (Anambra State), Professor Babatunde Osotimehin (Ogun State), Dr. Shettima Mustafa (Borno State), Nuhu Somo Way (Kaduna State), Ibrahim Sanni Bio (Kwara State), Sanni Mohammed Ndanusa (Niger State), Jibril Maigari (Yobe State), Aliyu Ikra Bilbis (Zamfara State), Ibrahim Yakubu Lame (Bauchi State), Bello Jibril Gada (Sokoto State), and Ibrahim Kazaure (Jigawa State). No portfolio has yet been linked to any particular name from this list.

13. (SBU) The five new nominees whose names were sent by President Yar'Adua to the Senate on December 3 and announced by Senate President Mark include:

-- Muhammed Adamu Aliero (Kebbi State), a sitting Senator and Governor of Kebbi State from 1999-2007 for the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). He also served in the Nigeria Customs and Excise Service and has worked in the private sector. His appointment is widely seen as a reward for his role in aiding Yar'Adua's in-law, Magatakarda, to succeed him as Governor of Kebbi State.

-- Babtunde Omotoba (Ekiti State) is a Director at Africa Finance Corporation. He has also held executive positions at Arthur Andersen (Nigeria) and Illinois-based Smith Whiley and Company.

-- Abdulrahman Adamu (Adamawa State) was the ANPP's

gubernatorial candidate in 2007 and is the younger brother of former Inspector General of Police, Gambo Jimeta.

-- Humphrey Enemakwu Abbah (Kogi State) is a lawyer who allegedly has a "419" advance fee fraud case pending against him in Niger State for defrauding a Brazilian company of \$5 million in July 2005. He was also reported to have been arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in 2006.

-- Salamatu Husaaini Suleiman (Kebbi State) is a former ANPP gubernatorial candidate.

¶4. (SBU) According to press reports, Captain Emmanuel Iheanacho (Imo State) is the one nominee whose name was forwarded to the Senate but not read aloud by Mark, for reasons so far unknown.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: As we suggested previously and the 18-minute confirmation hearing confirms (see reftel), the first tranche of 13 new Ministers includes mostly non-controversial nominations. The second tranche, and presumably a third, may not sail through the process as easily, particularly given threats made earlier by Senators that they would not simply rubber-stamp whatever names Yar'Adua might forward to them. End Comment.
Sanders